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HEGEL'S CONCEPTION OF FREEDOM.

A SENTENCE from Schwegler and another from von Hartmann will serve to open up the question which I desire to discuss. Schwegler writes:¹ "Hegel was the first to regard the history of philosophy in the unity of a single process ; but this fundamental idea, though true in principle, has been perhaps overstrained by him, in a manner that tends to destroy the freedom of human action." v. Hartmann says :² "Hegel degrades the individual to the level of a mere tool in the hands of the idea, and thinks that for the individual's weal or woe philosophy has no concern"; a moment later he adds: "Hegel demands that the individual should be sacrificed to the teleology of the absolute idea." It may not be useless to outline Hegel's conception of freedom, and then ask if there is any force in these criticisms.

Before giving Hegel's conception of freedom I may perhaps be allowed to make use of a distinction between psychological and moral freedom. Free will is, as we are told, the identification of ourselves with a conceived end. To such a definition no objection need be urged, so long as it is considered to be a matter of indifference whether this end, aimed at by the free agent, is good or bad. Manifestly the goodness or badness of an end does not interfere with the abstract possibility of its being freely chosen and realized. Accordingly freedom, in that use of the term, includes no moral quality ; the agent may be free, though he is in the bonds of iniquity. When we set aside the moral character of the end, we consider merely the agent's capacity to follow out his purpose, and this capacity is freedom, regarded, as we may venture to say, psychologically.

On the other hand, we may rightly speak of a person as at least not yet free, but in bonds, if he harbors a low ideal. He is not hopelessly in bondage, unless he is incapable of realizing

¹ *History of Philosophy*, Introduction.

² *Philosophy of the Unconscious*, 10th ed., Preface, p. 10.

what he believes to be good. Still he is not morally free, unless he throws himself on the side of this good. Indeed, complete moral freedom implies that within the reach of his volition must be not only a general good, but the ultimate good, however that may be defined. Close him away from the possibility of realizing this highest good, and you at the same time close him away from the highest liberty, the liberty involved in his being God's freeman. To speak of a man as free only if he can walk in the pure air of the highest conceivable purpose, is to use the word freedom in an ethical sense.

It goes some way in a discussion of free will to keep distinct these two senses of freedom,¹ although it does not remove the difference between Hegel and his critics; freedom abstracted from a concrete good is not here in debate. Neither Schwegler nor v. Hartmann accuses Hegel of setting up a theory, which would reduce free action to a play of merely physical tendencies. Hence the contest between Hegel and his opponents must be fought out on the field of ethics. The real question is, What does Hegel conceive to be the purpose of the world? Can man realize it, or must he content himself with something short of it? Is he free in reality, or free only in appearance? This question can be answered only by an estimate of Hegel's view of freedom as he has propounded it in the *Philosophy of Right* and in the introduction to the *Philosophy of History*.

The *Philosophy of Right*, as students of Hegel are aware, conducts us from the conception of an abstract, incomplete, and undeveloped will to that of a concrete, complete, and developed will. The process through which Hegel conceives the will to pass in becoming complete or absolute is not, it must be kept in mind, a process in time. Indeed, it is only with a modification of the meaning of the term that we can speak of the completion of the individual, in Hegel's conception of it, as a process at all, because this term almost of necessity suggests a temporal succession, even to Hegel, who yet continually

¹ I do not press the distinction, because the argument for freedom, viewed psychologically, seems valuable in the end only as it insists that the highest good must be for the individual. See the end of this article.

insists that in passing from the abstract to the concrete he is making use of a process of thought only. Even for Hegel, who is quite well aware that men in their earliest recorded life had a strong tribal or communal instinct, and aware also, that the individual has always sought to merge himself in some or other broad general ideal, the temptation is at times too strong to compare a simple abstract phase of personality with an actual primitive ideal. But notwithstanding these seeming lapses from grace¹ on the part of Hegel, he is abundantly clear that the abstract will, with the consideration of which he opens his ethical inquiries, is not a flesh-and-blood creation, is, in fact, no more a breathing man than Hawthorne's Feathertop, with its combined flail, pudding-stick and gold embroidery, is a real don. It is not meant that Hegel destroys the actual individual in order to scrutinize, but only that he might by means of this scrutiny suggest the way back into life.

When we start upon an inquiry into an actual historical process, our interest in the earlier stages is very different from our interest in the first stages of Hegel's logical evolution. In the case of history the persons who represent a past ideal, represent, I mean, in the sense of having thought it and worked it out, were warmed and cooled by much the same summer and winter as we, laughed and died like ourselves, and are therefore of perennial interest, and that, too, although the ideal, for which they struggled, cannot possibly be ours. But the earlier phases of an evolution, which we may call logical, formal, or abstract, are something like the preliminary arrangements of a juggler's trick. They are there merely for the sake of something else, and do not contain anything ultimately interesting, since everything of that kind has been carefully removed. Hence the first stages of Hegel's thought are valuable as revealing vividly by way of contrast what the true person is not, or, at most, what a mere side or fraction of a true personality is.

¹ The transference of the process of thought to time will be noticed afterwards, not as a lapse from grace, but as an indication of a more profound view. Here it is spoken of as a lapse from grace with the hope of keeping more simple what is at its simplest a difficult problem.

Such a fragment must needs assume a different guise, when by the progress of thought it is lifted into a totality. It is this totality which has throughout the whole process been the real point of attraction. Indeed, only by tacit reference to it, is it possible to show that what are called its earlier phases are incomplete and fractional.

With these precautions it is possible to understand the course which Hegel has followed in evolving his perfectly free man. The point of departure is, as has been said, abstract personality taken as implying a consciousness of one's self and others as independent and separate conscious units. After Hegel has explained how abstract personality reveals its own incompleteness, he goes on to show in successive parts of the *Philosophy of Right* how the abstract person comes to his full stature. In this process, the first stage is called abstract right, the second, morality, and the third, the social system. The idea most significant in the first part is that of property, which Hegel regards not as so much external matter, separable from the owner of it, but as the owner's outer self. Each thing a man owns is a piece of him ; and he who owns something is more complete than he who owns nothing. With regard to freedom, the point is that in full ownership my liberty becomes something higher and better, because in it are found all the relations to others commonly associated with the term 'rights,' and the individual in making a thing his own is willing the maintenance of these relations.

It is not necessary to follow Hegel closely, as he points out the different phases of ownership and contract, nor can we consider his view of crime, which he after his manner looks upon as transitional between rights and morality. It is enough to notice that the dialectic impulse of spirit or reason takes us beyond rights to something higher, in its task of realizing the absolutely free will. This movement does not mean that in the upper chambers of the free spirit a man no longer has rights. The absolutely emancipated will must have rights, but he will see them in connection with higher relations. So we come to morality. The characteristic feature of this second

step in the logical journey towards the absolute, is the private conscience with its unquenchable desire to realize the general well-being. Duty is now the watch-word of the will, — duty which the individual thinks that he must perform though the heavens fall. He who insists upon doing his duty at whatever risk bears a higher mind than he who is continually demanding his rights. The antagonism of individual to individual is not found in duty and the good conscience, as it is in rights. The enemy, from the standpoint of duty, is not a fellow-mortal, but the prevalence of evil, of which other persons or institutions may of course be the champions. Yet since in the best judgment of the private conscience the actual condition of things may seem to be absolutely hostile to goodness, it is impossible to regard as final the conception of life implied in duty.

A club or association, organized for the purpose of promoting the well-being of humanity, does not really take us outside the limited space occupied by what Hegel calls morality. Such a club is plainly based on the notion that the world as a whole has fallen on evil days, and therefore seeks before all things the world's regeneration. But, as Hegel is fond of saying, it has not been left to our late day to begin the strife for the well-being of man. Hence while the work of the conscientious individual or association is not necessarily useless, it must be founded on a clear recognition of what mankind has already done. In such a case the private or voluntary society becomes a civic institution. Accordingly we pass to the third and final stage, from which we discern that spirit or reason is at home in the institutions of the state. The rational individual thus finds his own realization in carrying out the reason implied in these institutions. The significance of the second stage as regards freedom is that the ideas of conscience and duty imply a condemnation of the notion that any merely external law or prescript is authoritative. Reason, we insist, shall acknowledge only what is seen to be reasonable. Therefore, if freedom is to be harmonized with obedience, the object to be obeyed must be shown to be not the will of any man or class of men, but the necessary embodiment of reason. Otherwise we are justified

in taking our own way regardless of consequences. Such is the view of freedom implied in the second part of Hegel's philosophy of right.

In the third part, named the social or ethical system, the author is concerned to show in some detail what are the precise lineaments of a truly rational state and constitution. He establishes the family as the social relation, which, from the standpoint of thought, is primary, because it contains the rational social principle in the elementary form of a universal feeling, love. The state contains this social principle as it finds expression in the thinking spirit. The individual who seeks his ideal in the family is higher than he who roams about in solitude 'like a rhinoceros,' however exalted the purpose of his single life may be. Onward from this point in the development the individual, who is, as Hegel thinks, a male, rises above the atmosphere of feeling into the region of the civic community, the key-word to whose nature, in general, is business. Trade and commerce are, in Hegel's thought, of this character, that the individual devoting himself to them, though seeking his own prosperity, seeks also the public welfare. Out of what seems to be a hurly-burly of self-seeking arises the general happiness; the spirit in its generosity giving 'gold for brass and silver for iron.' But the civic community does not explicitly embrace the very highest interests of the state, as the state cannot live by bread alone. Country and city, rich and poor, must see beyond their differences, and be comprised under the unity of that idea which will put in the foreground interests truly national. Hence, by necessary stages, we arrive at the state in its universal functions of legislation and administration. Here, again, we may put on seven-league boots, and merely observe that Hegel regards constitutional monarchy as the only rational form of government, and also justifies war, not as a necessary evil, so conceived by some modern apologists for war, but as a necessary good, as that factor in history which most tellingly exhibits the inferiority of the civic community and its ideals to the larger principle of national welfare. What, he asks, are peace,

prosperity, and wealth in comparison with national self-esteem? When a national crisis occurs, we at once see the narrowness of the life summed up in the words, "I will pull down my barns and build greater." And war, as Hegel thinks, is the most powerful agent in keeping vividly before the nation's mind the high aim, to which it should at all times aspire. To pursue the high aim of preserving an absolutely rational society is the occupation of a true and complete man, who, by so doing, inevitably finds his own highest good. Such a purpose, it must be added, is in direct accord with the end found in the words, "Do all to the glory of God," since the state is, as Hegel likes to say, the path of God in the world.¹

Who, then, is free? The question now almost answers itself. From the standpoint of religion, and the highest social morality, he is free who finds his interest in the public interest. As the public interests are the visible framework of the reason of the universe, to spend one's self for them is not to negate one's true being, but to enter into it. He who becomes one with a reasonable society in all its ramifications, becomes, also, one with the divine; and such a man is free.

In the light of this rapid and imperfect analysis of the *Philosophy of Right*, what are we to understand by the criticism urged against Hegel that his theory tends to destroy the freedom of human action, and that he cares little for the individual's weal or woe? To this question we are now in a position to give an answer which will be partly satisfying, and will also reveal the full extent of the problem.

In the first place, it is clear that Hegel certainly destroys human freedom, defined, as it is defined, in the writings of Hobbes, *e.g.*, or Rousseau. "The liberty of man consisteth in this," writes Hobbes, "that he finds no stop, in doing what he has the will, desire, or inclination to do."² Hobbes argues that in any kind of social life such liberty, true though it be, is impossible, since it contains the disruption of all human relations. For this reason, so he proceeds, men have abandoned

¹ *Philosophy of Right*, § 258; *Philosophy of History*, Introduction, p. 41.

² *Leviathan*, chap. xxi.

their indubitable right to true freedom, and "they have made an artificial man, which we call a commonwealth ; so, also, have they made artificial chains, called 'civil laws.' " In mere point of language, at any rate, the view of Rousseau, as contained in his famous sentence, "Man was born free, but everywhere he is in chains," is not unlike the view of Hobbes. It would be necessary to bring these words of Hobbes and Rousseau into relation with their entire system of thought, before a competent judgment could be passed upon them ; for nothing is so easy, and at the same time so ineffectual, as to prove unsound a detached expression, which was never intended by itself to claim validity. But, as it is Hegel with whom we are now concerned, we may, perhaps, assume that these views of Hobbes and Rousseau are 'self-standing,' and can, on that assumption, deal with them summarily. Hegel himself calls¹ them 'nebulous images,' which are without any justification in history. Instead of the theory that civil law is a restraint, he argues, as we have shown, that it is the expression of reason ; and instead of the view that he who obeys law sacrifices his liberty, he is at pains to prove that only he who yields obedience to rational law can be free. Hence, Hegel does certainly make short work of the freedom of the human will, if to 'freedom' is to be given the meaning which it bears in the philosophies of Rousseau and Hobbes. And yet, while destroying freedom in one of its possible significations, he is at the same time with open eyes indefinitely deepening the idea of freedom, by his proof that man is not really free except as he identifies himself with the state as the revelation of the divine. Thus, the contest between Hegel and his critics would seem to be happily settled in favor of Hegel.

But a glance at the views of Schwegler and v. Hartmann is sufficient to convince us that they could not have taken up weapons in defense of the banished theories of Hobbes and Rousseau. The real question is very different, and probes more deeply. That question may be put provisionally in this way : Does spirit or reason exhaust itself in the logical evolu-

¹ *Philosophy of History*, Introduction, p. 42.

tion of a rational constitution? If it be necessary to include the forms of religion, art, and philosophy, which express in terms of consciousness the principles of the state, in which they are found, the question would run: Is spirit or reason exhausted in the creation of a rational state with all its appropriate phases of conscious activity? If so, then we have already before us in full Hegel's view of freedom; if not, we must range more at large. Now, he himself in the closing paragraphs of the *Philosophy of Right*, and in the introduction to the *Philosophy of History*, declares that there is a wider stage for spirit than that which we have been inspecting, that, in fact, the whole history of the world is the theatre on which the spirit of the world and of freedom is exhibited; and it is precisely in connection with Hegel's view of the relation of the evolution of the world-spirit to the thought and will of the individual that the criticisms, which have formed our point of departure, apply. It is, therefore, necessary to outline Hegel's view of the evolution of spirit, and from this angle of vision consider anew the question of human freedom.

Hegel has remarked that every thinker is the child of his time. The totality, to which an individual belongs, is made up of the laws of his country, its natural features and its history, together with the deeds of the individual's own ancestors.¹ This matured totality, continues Hegel, constitutes the spirit of a people. To it the individual members belong. No one remains behind it; no one advances beyond it. As the relation of one time to the next is the relation of development, no one, it is plain, has been able in the past to anticipate the next stage in the development of spirit. How, then, does the next step come into being, if it was found nowhere in the consciousness of men? Hegel answers that it originated in the dialectical movement of the world-spirit, or, to translate the language of thought into that of religion, it is God willing his own will.² Of this spirit the acts of great men, world-historical personages, are the outward embodiment, although even they are far from

¹ *Philosophy of History*, Introduction, p. 55.

² *Ibid.*, Introduction, p. 21.

being conscious of the full significance of what they do,¹ since the units with which the world-spirit deals are not individuals but nations. In fact, the dialectical movement at the basis of world-history is the self-caused movement of reason, making its way into universal and true existence gradually, and mirroring itself during the process more or less feebly in the thought and will of the most significant world-agents. The goal of the process is, as we have said, universal existence, which Hegel has otherwise defined as spirit in its completeness or essential being.² This completed spirit is self-consciousness, now at last wholly realized, and this realized self-consciousness is, and here again is our problem, "freedom."³ History is nothing else than the development of the conception of freedom, and human beings are free if their insight corresponds to the reason realized in the world.⁴

Before asking a second time how far Hegel repels by anticipation the charge of Schwegler and v. Hartmann, we may observe that Hegel in his *Philosophy of History* seems definitely committed to the view that the realization of spirit is a process in time. What I called a lapse from grace, where Hegel was professedly dealing with abstractions, is here a confirmed mood. And it is surely a higher standpoint, because it is an attempt to show that truth and reality are one, that reason is in some way or other at the basis of everything that has occurred in the history of mankind. The historical method of investigation, a method which has been pushed almost to an extreme, takes its departure from Hegel's determination to prove that the time-materials are realities.

But for us the real points of interest are the special character or quality of truth or freedom assigned to any bygone period of history by Hegel's principle of development, and more particularly the nature of that freedom which is the upshot of the whole procedure. First, as to the process itself, it may be

¹ *Philosophy of History*, Introduction, pp. 31, 70.

² *Ibid.*, Introduction, p. 58.

³ *Ibid.*, Introduction, p. 26.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 476.

observed that the limited explanation of the universe furnished by the more abstract categories of the *Logic* is paralleled in the *Philosophy of History* by the limited consciousness and correspondingly limited sense of freedom attained by nations in the past. The formula that in the East one was free, in Greece and Rome some were free, and in the modern state all are free, is not adequate, since it tacitly assumes that freedom has the same meaning at each successive epoch. But when only one was free, his freedom was merely caprice, which may be indifferently ferocity or mildness ; when some were free, this freedom was consistent with a rigorous thralldom of our common human nature ;¹ only in the final stage, when all are free, have we reached, says Hegel, an adequate understanding of the idea. Of course, the world-spirit always contained within itself what was to be unfolded, yet, as Hegel remarks, the time in the past was not ripe. Hence no one living in Eastern lands, no one in Greece or Rome was really free, since no one had any conception of real or rational freedom. Liberty of action, in the common acceptance of the phrase, the Eastern despot or the aristocracy of Greece undoubtedly possessed, much as we may be said to possess it now ; further, both freemen and slaves had also the higher liberty of identifying themselves with the institutions of their respective peoples, and thus of maintaining what seemed to them, both slaves and free, a reasonable social existence. But absolute liberty was a star which had not as yet come within their ken. It lay in the unexplored and undeveloped background of the world-spirit, a stratum which, ponderously large and thick in past ages, but passing since then out of the region of the unconscious into that of the conscious, has been becoming thinner and thinner, until at the stage of complete self-consciousness and complete freedom, if such a stage has arrived or should ever arrive, the unconscious or merely potential will have vanished altogether. Yet inadequate the thought and liberty of man would always have remained, had it not been for the latent impulse of the world-consciousness, the inward guiding soul, a 'hidden, most profoundly hidden,

¹ *Philosophy of History*, Introduction, p. 19.

unconscious instinct,'¹ whose nature it was to strive towards completeness.

Hegel did not regard the process of evolution as dragging itself on *ad infinitum*. In his thought there could be no such subservience of spirit to the mere lapse of time. He was as firmly convinced as any of the apostles that it was rational to speak of these latter days, and of the inauguration of the kingdom of divine reason. Just so surely as in the *Logic*, after wading through the necessary swamps, bogs, and morasses of the lower categories, we reach the table-lands of self-consciousness, so in the *Philosophy of History*, after passing through the lower phases of spirit and freedom, we reach spirit and freedom in their completeness. To set up as an end something which by its very nature can never be attained is, as Hegel affirms, to deprive existence of its meaning ; its bones would be marrowless, its blood would be cold.

So much for the process ; now what is the culmination ? Apart from the view that the completion of spirit is a mere ideal, in the sense that it serves to direct our efforts, but is hopelessly beyond realization, two other possible interpretations of Hegel's views confront us, (1) that absolute freedom is to be had at some definite time future, and (2) that it is had now. A third interpretation, conceivable though not probable, is that at a fixed time past freedom was attained, and that from that time forward the development is not towards freedom, but of freedom. The improbability of such a view lies in this that, as the course of evolution is admitted to be uninterrupted, inadequate conceptions would be a characteristic of every age, and the selection of any event or series of events as the introduction of complete freedom would be as arbitrary as, *e.g.*, the selection of a particular day or week as the beginning of modern thought. Hence such a view leads to the nirvana of an endless succession quite as markedly as the view which Hegel himself has set aside.

As to the idea that spirit will at some definite future time come to perfect self-consciousness, a word will suffice. In

¹ *Philosophy of History*, Introduction, pp. 8, 26.

Hegel the future aroused no interest ; witness his dismissal of the New World with the remark that it belonged to the future. He meant that the Americas could not be said to have yet entered the full stream of the world, and had to wait their development. Doubtless the future would be of momentous interest to peoples who were now merely embryonic, but only because they were at a point over which fully developed peoples had already passed. Accordingly one of the few prophecies, in which Hegel permitted himself to indulge, is that a race-war was likely to occur between North and South America. But such a war was, so Hegel said, in the future, since the peoples of America engaged in conquering and tilling the soil were self-conscious only in germ, as compared with the mature nations of Europe.

Thus we are shut up to the view that now at last, after a wide compass round has been fetched, the course of development is finished, the completion of freedom has been gained, and is portrayed at full length in the *Philosophy of Right*. Thus freedom stands fully revealed, not as the union of the individual with any social system, but only with that social order said by Hegel to be the realization of spirit. For freedom is in the end "nothing but the recognition and adoption of such universal substantial objects as Right and Law, and the production of a reality that is accordant with them — the State."¹ Deepened, undoubtedly, has this conception of the state become by Hegel's proof that it not only answers the claims of abstract logical deduction, but also is the heir of time, and time, too, viewed as the vehicle for the revelation of spirit. But time is after all only the husk of spirit and may, when spirit has matured, be discarded. Time was never really a phase of the inner nature of spirit, but in some sense an accident, since, as Hegel says, all the phases of spirit were present in spirit from the outset. Hence when the great day's work of spirit is over, time is no more, and the spirit in complete consciousness of itself enters upon the enjoyments of its endless Sabbath. "Freedom has found the means of realizing its ideal, — its true existence.

¹ *Philosophy of History*, Introduction, p. 62.

This is the ultimate result which the process of history is intended to accomplish . . . Yet length of time is something entirely relative, and the element of spirit is eternity. Duration, properly speaking, cannot be said to belong to it."¹ Spirit has performed its arduous progress from the City of Destruction, or the natural man, to the Celestial City of perfect and enduring freedom. Hence time is not a feature of things, as they really are, and only seems to be such a category of reality, because the world-spirit has revealed itself gradually.

Once more, then, comes the question, Is the individual's freedom threatened by Hegel's thought? Can Hegel rightly be accused of propounding a system, which implies indifference to the individual's weal or woe? And certainly the problem has been changed. It is in accordance with the preceding analysis of Hegel's theory that whoever is excluded from participating in the realization of the universal spirit, so far as to be unable to have before him that realization as an end, is not free. Free he may imagine himself to be, because he can wriggle around at will within the confines of his ordinary wants and hopes; but he is no more really free than the prisoner who strolls about in a jail-yard under the eye of a watchman. "Death," says Tourguéneff, "is a fisherman. He captures us in his net, but lets us remain a little while in the water. We swim here and there, but are always in the net; and the fisherman will take us when it pleases him."² If the individual cannot in any sense become one with objective reason, he is a fish swimming in the water in the net of Death. Thus, in the first place, the peoples of past ages, as has been said, could not have been really free, since spirit in its completeness, as defined by Hegel, lay beyond their thought and will. Secondly, when the completion of freedom was initiated, this step was not taken by any free agent. The hidden impulse of spirit was at the proper time revealed. But, to omit the historical difficulties, what can, in the third place, be said about us, upon whom the completed spirit is now shining? If, let us

¹ *Philosophy of History*, Introduction, pp. 109, 116.

² *Un Bulgare*, p. 304.

repeat, the individual is to be regarded as free, when he not only apprehends the reason in his objective relations, in the same way as a scientist might have a knowledge of a law of nature, but also in his conduct identifies himself with this realized reason, it is beyond dispute that Hegel not merely recognizes the individual's freedom, but is himself the author of this conception of freedom. But if, on the other hand, the individual is free only in so far as it is possible for him to create a higher reason or originate a higher spirit, and thereby, it may be, transform established political and social relations, then Hegel lends no countenance to such an interpretation of freedom, and, indeed, furnishes no criterion by which to distinguish such an act from personal whim or unreasoning enthusiasm. If the activity of will is not an originating activity, but only accepts and ratifies, or at best mounts guard, then freedom in the sense of ability to initiate a new and higher good, is an impossibility, spirit has done its work, and our only labor is now merely to enjoy the profits.

With Hegel's conception of freedom before them, it is little wonder that there arose amongst thinkers a desire to return to Kant, whose view that he alone is good who wills the good will seemed to restore to the individual the initiative, of which Hegel had deprived it. The desire came, doubtless, from an imperfect apprehension of the real position which Hegel holds with regard to Kant, since Hegel's conception of history, as the working out of the inner goodness of a universal reason, shows the insufficiency of the idea that humanity should now institute a paradise. Yet this return to Kant was not wholly unjustified, since it implied that a universal paradise is gained only by its being willed, and can be surpassed by the willing of a higher. For he who runs can read that humanity is not in its highest heaven, although it has in many respects outgrown Hegel's conception of society.

Nor is it a surprise that v. Hartmann himself, believing in the absolute development of reason, should have concluded that the underlying unconscious instinct or impulse of spirit, of which Hegel had spoken, is a permanent phase of spirit, and

therefore the true explanation of reality. It may be a matter of indifference whether this view is or is not a legitimate deduction from Hegel's philosophy, although v. Hartmann himself calls Hegel 'the unconscious precursor of the philosophy of the Unconscious.' But the theory of v. Hartmann has this peculiar merit that he indirectly restores reality to the individual will through his assertion that self-consciousness is not complete. What Hegel regarded as an absolute climax is for v. Hartmann a new point of departure, which, when we look back upon it, may be seen to contain an idea of freedom only relatively more perfect than that of Greece.

Moreover, psychologists now claim that feeling, in whatever way it is manifested, is not a stage through which self-consciousness passes on its way to thought, but a permanent phase of the highest consciousness, and are also seeking to prove that it is only as the universal has form in the individual consciousness that it is real at all. And many thinkers of our own time, of whom Mr. Bradley may be taken as a representative, are of opinion that something, which he calls "sentience,"¹ the direct and complete union of the individual and reality, is the ultimate character of consciousness. Mr. Bradley is persuaded that when the true interpretation of thought and reality is recognized, "thought is so transformed that to go on calling it thought seems indefensible."²

These different writers are, in my opinion, expressing a truth. Yet it must be remembered that the reality, into whose presence the individual is now ushered, is not a simple 'presented' or 'given,' in the old sense of these terms, but a reality of which the whole course of nature and history is but the harbinger. To assert that the individual, if he is to be fully free, must not simply identify himself with such a reality, but recreate it, is to give the idea of freedom a new meaning, a meaning which it cannot be made to bear in the philosophy of Hegel. Because, to see the need for recreating the actual reality, here considered as legal, social, national and other relations, is not only to see the reason in things, but, if a

¹ *Appearance and Reality*, p. 144.

² *Id.*, pp. 171-2.

sharp contrast be allowed, also the unreason in things, or rather that things must be made to conform to a higher reason. Such reconstruction, made possible indeed by the thought of Hegel, inevitably implies that Hegel's conception of the state and freedom is not final. Hegel has bequeathed to his successors, it is true, the task of interpreting him, as he said, but he has bequeathed to them also the task of reinterpreting and reconstructing reality in the light of ideas which, though not his, would not, but for him, have been theirs.

S. W. DYDE.